

# The Darshan

Job 6:13 Do I have any power to help myself,  
now that success has been driven from me?

The postman did not come on Saturday. Anon waited for his new bank card and it never arrived, so he could not afford to go to the market, not even a dollar for the basket at Andre's funeral. Florida was warm and sunny. The day went by slow and easy. He awakened in the afternoon and had some orange juice. There was nothing for breakfast. He put out the remainder of the chicken for dinner that was in the freezer and went out for some coffee after collecting the change on his table. There in the daylight, Anon Eterniti read the morning papers and remembered when he was a child and the news had seemed somehow important to him. Now there was little he believed. He had learned to be unconcerned even when he paid attention.

At the age of forty two years old, Anon Eterniti was feeling numb to the world, like some vast and cold future awaited him, or even worse, that the entire planet was moving forward without him, that he was lost in the limbo of hell or banished into a state of continual poverty, that for him, there would be no progress, no resolution of dream, no conclusion to ideas, only sentimental feelings of abandonment lingering in the distant horizon, leaving him slightly beyond the reach of reality. That was it, he decided. It was all true. They had driven him insane. He was psychotic. Hopeless.

He saw the doctors five times a month and the year before he had spent six weeks in a hospital where they took blood three times a week for almost a month. There were many diagnosis. He had been labeled depressed, disconnected, delusional, psychotic, irrational, paranoid. No one had ever accused Anon Eterniti of being normal. He would toy with the idea and how profound that would be, but of course, that was ridiculous. No one would ever say that. It was like they had too much to lose or something.

In the morning he went to work and got fired. He drove home listening to the radio and took a nap. He dreamed a strange dream that he could not understand and awakened to a phone call for another job interview. He went back to sleep and spent the afternoon in bed. He dreamed he was on Broadway and Columbus in North Beach, San Francisco. It was night and he was at that little

dance hall with Miguel and Monique. She looked beautiful. She was from El Salvador and had a large house near Sausalito. They had lunch the next afternoon in a fish market near fisherman's wharf. There were other parts about the dream too. He was walking around Union Square by himself and looking through the large department stores and the dark dingy bars off the side streets. He would stop in for a beer or a glass of Remy and wind up on the subway back to Berkeley.

He stopped into the Fat Slice Pizza Parlor once he made it back to Telegraph Avenue. He ordered a big thick slice of cheese and made his way to the bench where Bobby Taylor was sitting.

"What's happening black man?" Bobby Taylor wondered.

"Why do you call me the black man Bobby? I'm not black." he said to him.

"Because you are the blackest of the blackmen." Bobby Taylor answered.

"I see." Anon replied.

They sat together and smoked cigarettes. Bobby Taylor was living under a garage in a laundryroom on the South side of town. He once was a great trumpet player. Now he was shattered. His whole day was spent watching people and moving from one bench to another. He rarely talked to anybody. Marco Polo arrived with Cevat and they wanted Anon to count his money. He had nine dollars. Enough for a pitcher of beer at Kips. Bobby Taylor stayed behind to sell incense. Bobby Taylor understood magic. If a couple walked by looking uncomfortable together, Bobby Taylor would reach out his hand full of incense and say to them gently, making his offer, "lovers...." and whether or not they bought Bobby Taylor's incense was irrelevant, instantly they seemed transfixed into some magical relationship beyond their own imagination. The three of them went to Kips and watched the World Cup series on television and spent the rest of the money.

Anon said goodbye after a few hours of hanging out with the two of them and returned to his small one bedroom apartment on the East Side of town. The girl had left on Monday morning for her sister's in Boston and said she was now dating a shipping magnate. He was cooking Miso soup when the doorbell rang and the furniture man came to repossess the couch and dresser drawers. He sat on the floor and stared into the darkness and listened to the rain on the roof. The power had been cut a few hours earlier and the Miso soup would never heat.

He walked out the door and you could hear the sound of the slam from across the street. It was not a matter of pride or anything like that, he just felt beaten. Just then, he realized there was no money for anything and he had to think fast and figure something out and then all of a sudden he realized that he was standing in the middle of the street and a car put on the brakes and stopped just in time.

When she got out of the car with her flowing red hair he realized she was the girl from the Café that the director Paul Roach had introduced her to. She said her name was Penny Lane and apologized for the near accident. She almost demanded he get in the car and go to her place so he flopped down into the seat and enjoyed the ride.

She had a nice house with a garden and the leather chair was her grandfather's from Sicily and he sat in the comfy chair and felt like a hundred years old. The matchbook on the table was from 1923 Catalonia and was a picture of a man bullfighting. She offered him some fresh fruit and they began to talk about favorite painters and she painted too and was really much better than him. Anon admitted that he hadn't been painting recently, that he had been writing a little but could not find the inspiration to paint for awhile. She returned with a hash pipe and the next thing he knew he was on the floor naked with her on top and by the time it was finished he couldn't even remember what happened. He thought to himself, this Sicilian girl sure is sneaky as she practically dragged him into bed like he was some vanquished animal.

In the morning she picked raspberries fresh from the garden and put them in the cereal. He remembered thinking that it was the best cereal he ever had. They talked for awhile in bed and she said she had to go to a job at the bank and invited him to stay and hang out until she got back. He spent the afternoon in the old chair listening to records he had never heard before, some Santana, some Todd Rundgren, others.

He went back to his apartment in the late afternoon and there was a message on his phone to check in with the local temp agency and they found him a desk in the toxic waste disposal section of the lab and it would be his job to log all the spilled waste and in the morning he went to his first day and they made him walk through a Geiger counter in the hallway because there were so many barrels of waste in the yard that they were afraid the employees were getting contaminated. It really scared the crap out of him. Mostly they sat around and played solitaire on the computer and every once in a while some professor would spill a bottle of mercury or something and the boys next to him, Charlie and Tom would jump into their yellow hazmat suits and clean up the mess. Then they would give him a description of the accident and he would put it in the log. It always interrupted his solitaire game. In the afternoons he would take the shuttlebus down the city and buy some lunch and then take the shuttle back for the rest of the shift. Evenings were usually slow. The spills always seemed to happen just before lunch. His supervisor, Antonia showed him the key room where there were hundreds of keys on the wall. Then she pointed to a clipboard and told him he could log out a vehicle anytime he needed it. There was a parking lot outside called the motorpool and there were hundreds of brand new Fords in the lot.

He went for lunch down on the Avenue and you had to wait for a shuttle to take you down the hill to get there. He was walking down the street with a pizza when he saw the girl standing on the corner holding a map upside down looking for the name of the street she was on.

"Maybe I can help you." he said cordially. She had on these tight fitting jeans and had an absolute rock and roll body. She was wearing sunglasses and had this stunningly beautiful face.

"I don't know." she said.

"You have an accent. Where is it from?" he wanted to know.

"Geneva." she explained.

"Wow. I thought it sounded French." he said.

“Yes, it is part French, part German.” she told him.  
“Oh I see. Are you lost?” he wondered.  
“I was looking for a store to buy bluejeans.” she said.  
“Blue jeans... hmmm.. blue jeans.... oh yeah. Levi’s.”  
“Yes. Levi’s” she said. “They are hard to find in my country. Very expensive.”  
“Oh. Right. I heard that. Well, there’s two stores, actually next door to each other. They are right across the street. I’ll show you.”

They went to the Aardvark’s jean store and she tried on a few pairs and he sat there in amazement looking at her in the mirror.

“How long are you here for?” he wondered.  
“Two weeks.” she said.  
“What’s your name? How old are you?” he asked her.  
“My name is Elizabeth. I’m Seventeen.” she said.  
“I am in so much trouble.” he said.

He walked her home and said goodbye and returned to the shuttle stop and finished the work day with very little to do. Charlie and Tom had to go to a meeting in the afternoon so he was pretty much on his own. He spent the night at Penny’s and she cooked fish with a good salad and introduced him to her sister Deidra and she was sort of New York hip and friendly and they all got along really well. He checked his messages and Howard had called from Los Angeles to invite him to a party.

The next day at work was payday. In the afternoon he went to the bank and cashed the check. In the last fifteen minutes before work was over he checked out one of the white Ford’s and drove to Elizabeth’s house. He rang the doorbell and her roommate answered. She looked at him sort of suspiciously and looked out to see the car with the government plates on it and relaxed a bit. Elizabeth walked in and looked gorgeous. She was combing her hair and had obviously just got out of the shower.

“What’s up?” she said.  
“Pack your things. We’re going to L.A. for the weekend.” he explained.  
“How are we getting there?” she wondered.  
“I got a car from the lab. Come on. Pack your things.”  
“Alright. Give me a minute.” she said.

As they walked out the roommate followed them to the car with a pencil and paper.

“Could you leave me a number in case her parents call or something? I might need to get in touch with her.” she said.

“Oh yeah. Sure. My Mom’s house is 310-275-6785.” he told her.

“Are you sure everything will be fine?” she was sort of quizzical.

"Oh yeah. No problem." he assured her.

The drive was long and they stopped a few times for cigarettes, chocolate and water. He was sort of shocked by her appetite. He bought some chips and she didn't want any. Probably this is what they mean by a model diet, he thought to himself. They were listening to Michael Jackson in the car and he was playing "Bad." She turns to him in the middle of the song and says, "What is the meaning of this word, but?"

"Huh, I don't understand the question?"

"But. But. He says but." she demands to know the meaning.

"Oh of course, you French girls don't know the meaning of but. God I love that Country." he begins. "Let's see, he says "Your but is mine, I'm telling you...." he pauses to reflect.

"But can mean two things. First it can be the back of your behind."

"Ah, like ass." she says laughing.

"Yes.", he reflects again, "also it can mean an alternative, like when you don't want to do something, like an excuse or something. Gosh it's hard to explain that word. Let's just say, you got me on that one."

They arrived in L.A about nine o'clock and they could not stay at his Mother's house because they were out of town. Luckily, John Pikus had a place in Hollywood. It was a big pink house where he and his band were rehearsing. Granny, his drummer from Texas was the only one left in the house when he called.

"Granny? Granny it's Anon and I have this girl with me and we need a place to stay."

"Sure man. The fellas are all in New York for a music convention. All the rooms are free this weekend. I've got a few friends here and we're just hanging out. Come over."

"See you in a half hour or so." Anon clicked the phone down and they got back in the car and drove across town.

When they arrived Granny showed them upstairs to the third floor where Johnny's room was empty and they threw their bags on the floor and followed Granny downstairs to the second level where there was the kitchen and livingroom. A few people were lying on the couches and he recognized Joey, the lead singer from "Pirates of Venus" who was almost drunk and sitting in the bean bag chair.

"Hey Joey. How's everything?"

"Pretty good. We're playing the Roxy this Tuesday. It should be a good show."

"Man. Sorry I'm going to miss it. We have to get back by Sunday night."

Anon awakened from his afternoon dream. It was a funny thing. He hadn't seen the girl in nearly twenty years now. Why was he still having the dream? It was strange.

He was living in a half-way house in Florida now. He called it a concentration camp. There were no girls allowed and the place was overcrowded with guys. His mail was not coming and he hadn't been able to hold a steady job now since...well that's another story for another time....perhaps later.

He was lost in an alley near fifth street in Downtown L.A. It was one of those cloudy days when there was nothing to do. He was drinking a bottle of Chianti with Helga and Rabbi Heron and they played a few hands of poker on a blanket behind the dry cleaners. Dr. Louie Sazio came by and wanted to borrow twenty dollars for a fix and they all managed to put it together for him. As Dr. Sazio went around the corner they heard a whispered conversation and someone said "'I'm not playing with you'" and there was a sound like the backfire of a motorcycle and sirens from a distance. There was a sketch artist near a park bench and she drew a picture of Bozo the clown. The police arrived. The Doctor was up against the wall being frisked for the bag and the police were also arresting a wedding photographer in the park who was photographing a neighbor's window.

Anon decided he had better take the subway up to Hollywood and see Alice because she was waiting for him to take him to dinner. He took the train and walked down the boulevard. She had a place near Ivar and he rang the bell and she rang the buzzer for him to come up and he climbed the stairs and she opened the door.

"Want some cheese?" she asked. She was drying her hair with a towel and looked pretty in a white robe.

"Got any crackers?" he asked her.

"Sure in the freezer." she said.

"The freezer? You keep crackers in the freezer?" he wondered.

"Yeah. Keeps them fresh." she said.

He walked into the kitchen and took a knife out of the drawer and there was a siren sounding downstairs and traffic cop was pulling over a black lexus and checking the plates. He walked back into the livingroom and sat down at the small table near the window as she did her hair by the mirror.

"So is it a plot?" she wondered.

"What?" he wondered.

"Your new book?" she asked.

"No. No. Of course not. It's only fiction. Imagination." he said.

"Well," she laughed, "better let it run wild." she said.

"Yeah, I know" he replied.

“What’s it about?” she asked.

“I don’t know yet. It’s got something to do with rock and roll though, I hope.” he answered.

She went over to the radio and turned it on. Shirley Basset was singing...

“Send in the clowns....there ought to be clowns...” Anon stepped over to the window and tapped on the glass. There was a small spider in the corner and he fell off the pane and onto the ledge.

Anon laughed bitterly.

“Funny song...”

“Why” Alice wondered. “I think it’s sad.”

“Yeah. Sad.” he said.

“Something you want to talk about?” she wondered.

“Yeah. I suppose. Dr. Sazio got his brains blown out in a dispute over a twenty dollar bag.” he explained.

“You’re kidding?” she looked at him hard.

“No. Not at all. It’s almost depressing me, really. I swear. Helga, Rabbi Hiron and I were playing poker and I pulled an eight high and Helga had a suicide jack and then there was a shot.” Anon said.

“Jeez.” she said. “What did the Rabbi have?”

“I don’t know. The whole sequence went so fast. I didn’t have time to check.”

“That’s so strange.” she said.

“Yeah. I know.” he said.

“You want to go get some dinner?” she wondered. “I’m starved.”

“Yeah, me too.” he said.

“How about some Thai food?” she said.

“Yeah, why not? We could go to that place on the corner I like. The place with the good soup.”

“Great.” she said.

“Before we go.... do you have anything to drink?” he wondered.

“Like what?” she wondered.

“Man, I don’t know. Something strong. Vodka, Grappa, anything I can get the taste of this cheap tobacco out of my mouth.” he said.

“Yeah.” she leaned over and kissed him. “But I don’t like you when you’re drunk.” she says.

“Yeah, and I don’t like me when I’m sober.” he tells her.

He went over to the cupboard and pulled out a bottle of Barolo Pio Cesare and poured a couple of glasses. “Let’s toast. To a really boring summer.”

## Chapter Two Bottom of the Seventh, One out.

The Dodgers were playing again. He loved the game. It was a sunny afternoon and the team was really looking good. The perfect picture of a professional organization, back to back wins against

Chicago, upsetting the Reds in a three game series, they were really on a great streak. After a strikeout in the bottom of the ninth the Dodgers had it one. He decided to go have a drink at Bistro 61 on the Sunset Strip and ended up running into the Maitre'D from the Roosevelt Hotel, his old buddy from San Francisco, Snake Eyes. Snake said he was in town to see his girlfriend who was studying Math at the University of California at Los Angeles and she had a small apartment in Westwood and Snake invited him over for a party on Friday night and Anon said yes he'd come, paid the bill and said goodbye.

He walked over to his apartment on Franklin Place and it was a long walk from Sunset. He had to take his television over for a repair. So he picked it up off the counter and waited for a bus to Little Santa Monica and Western Avenue. In front of Dave's Television Repair there was a sign on the locked door, be back in a half hour. So he plopped the television down on the sidewalk and decided to wait. After about forty minutes of waiting he was getting tired. Manny from Silver Lake pulled up in his purple Chevrolet and asked him if he wanted to buy a Sony stereo with dual tape player. Anon told him that he didn't have enough money and Manny told him to get in and take a ride home because Dave wasn't coming back, he had sold the store and split for Guatemala.

Anon left the television on the street and took the ride home. Manny lit a big fat joint and they took the freeway home. It was slow and there was plenty of traffic. He asked Manny to drop him off at the Pic and Save on Vine and he went shopping for some soap and paper towels. He bought a few chocolate bars and stuffed some ritz crackers into the basket and paid the cashier who was this really cute punk rocker chick named Tina and she smiled and complimented him by saying "tight pants" and he just smiled and took his things and adjusted his belt and walked out.

Out front he ran into his old friend Tequila who was writing a column for the local paper and she was the payphone when he came out.

"What's cooking good looking?" he said to her.

"Hold on...one sec..." she said.... a minute went by and she put the phone down.

"I'm trying to get tickets to the show tonight at the Opium Lounge." she told him. "I think it's sold out and the manager won't answer his phone at his apartment."

"Who Dino? Ah, don't worry about it. He still owes me for some oxy's I gave him last week. We can get in, no problem. Just meet me at the door. What time do they go on?"

"I think ten thirty." she said.

"Well, I'll be out there around ten" he told her. "Who is it?"

"The Price Junkies, I think they are from Seattle, they used to play with Mister Pain and the Newlydreads."

"Wow, really?"

"Yeah... totally."

He was walking home when he noticed a bunch of people hanging out in front of IST Casting and they were smoking so he bummed a cigarette from one of the actors and hung out for awhile.



“What’s the audition for?”

“Nintendo.” one of the actor’s told him.

“Hmmm, really....” he walked in and signed into the audition and waited for the casting director. After about ten minutes he got called.

“Anon Eterniti.... wow that’s a strange name..What agency are you with?”

“Oh, I don’t have an agent. I just thought I’d crash.”

“Alright I guess, come on in. I’m Danielle. Nice to meet you.” she said and shook his hand.

He walked into a dark studio and there was a big camera and a dark glass booth behind it. She walked into the booth and started to direct the skit over the microphone.

“Alright Anon, in this spot you are just waking up. I want you to strip down to your underwear and get on the couch and pretend to wake up, stretch, cook some eggs on the sink and then go back to bed.” she explained.

“That’s it?”

“Yeah.”

She made him do it twice and then thanked him and he left quickly. He noticed Lisa, a red head who used to date his old friend, drummer Chris Underwood from the band “No names.” She was trying out for another ad across the hall.

“Hey Lisa. What’s going on?”

“What’s up?” she wondered.

“Talk to Chris lately?”

“Nah. He’s on tour. He doesn’t call. Thinks he’s god now.”

“Oh too bad. Well, say hello for me, would ya?”

“I don’t think I’ll be talking to that dirtbag for awhile. He stole money from me before he left.”

“Well, if you see him...”

He went over to the Café Mozart and had a coffee with some Danish. It was a strawberry pastry actually and he enjoyed watching the tourist crowd come through the mall. There were visitors from every country. He went over to the Bice Restaurant on the first floor afterwards and stopped in to say hello to Frank.

“Hey, how’d my agent?” Frank smiled.

“Ah, come on Frank, I haven’t worked in six months.”

“How about some red wine. It’s good for the soul.” Frank says.

“Yeah, soul...they got taken too....everybody went for the ride of their lives..”

“I know.” Frank set the bottle down and adjusted his apron.

“It’s a rough business. I thought it would be easy for me.” Anon said softly.

“Yes, but you shouldn’t quit. You were good at it. You were the best agent I ever had.” Frank says.

“Ah Frank, come on. I can’t work anymore. They won’t let me. You know that.”

“I know.” Frank poured another glass. A couple entered looking for a table. Frank patronized them overcheerfully. “Oh, hello, welcome...” he put them in the corner away from them and in the darkness. Anon laughed.

“The bullshit never stops. You know that.” Frank says.

“I know.” Anon says and takes another drink.

Anon spent another half hour or so drinking before he managed to lift himself out of the chair and make it home, crossing the street on Highland Avenue and passing the Cambodian doughnut store and the Liquor stop where he now refused to shop because the counter guy had stolen five dollars from his change. He had to go down the street on the other corner of Las Palmas for his odds and ends now. The store was called the Hollywood Bizarre and Rod from the Phillipines ran the counter and was sweet. He worked for a pair of Indian fellas who came in every once and awhile to count the money,

He decided to head over to the store and visit Rod. Rod was dressed in an all white suit and singing.

“Hey you look like you are ready for the opera?” Anon said.

“Yeah, I’m going to Las Vegas for the weekend.” Rod said.

“Wow. Have a good time.”

“Oh I will. Lots of girls. In the Phillipines when I was a boy I used to work at the Casinos and the girls would bring me drinks and they always wore feathers.” Rod explained.

“Feathers?”

“Lots of feathers.” Rod told him.

“I bet they had great legs too.” Anon said. He took a seat behind the counter and Rod offered him a cigarette.” A customer walked in.

“A pack of Camel Lights..” the customer ordered. Rod rang it up.

“You want bacon strips with that too you son of a bitch.” Rod said quietly as the guy left.

“Relax Rod, it’s only cigarettes.” Anon tells him.

“Anyway, that’s part of the reason I have to get away to Las Vegas for the weekend.” Rod tells him.

“Maybe I could get a hut on the beach near Manila.” Anon tells him.

“Oh the beach is very beautiful there Anon. When I was a child I used to bathe in the river and we would catch big eels. They would crawl all around us.” Rod explained.

“How did you get out of the country?” Anon wondered.

“I met a beautiful English lady at the Casino and she helped me get my passport.”

“Well, I’m going next door for a pizza.” Anon explained.

The pizza place was always a tough experience. He had memories of being there as a child with his father. His father would conduct the bands in Hollywood and the recording studio where he worked was around the corner and they would stop at the pizza joint in the afternoon between sessions. There was a jukebox in the front and a Mexican chef and his wife behind the counter. They always knew what he wanted and he didn’t really have to speak. There was a girl dressed in all pink and she was ordering a full pie and she walked out with a guy wearing a Chicago White Sox hat. Just then there was

the sound of a kid slamming a skateboard against the street and wheeling off.

He put a dollar in the jukebox and played Junior's Farm by Paul McCartney and Wings.

"Let's go, let's go

Down to Junior's Farm where I wanna lay low

Low life, high life, oh let's go

Take me down to Junior's Farm

Everybody tag along

Take me down to Junior's Farm

Take me back, take me back

I wanna go there..."

He started off down the street with his one slice of pizza and some guy he had never seen before looks at him accusingly and says just "Hey" It kind of made him mad because it wasn't a friendly type of hey it was like an angry, mean way of intonation. He thought to himself, man you probably just arrived from some hick town near the edge of nowhere and here I am a guy who has lived in this city his whole life and all of a sudden I'm the complete stranger.

He started walking back to his apartment in a sort of dejected state and he ran into homeless Timmy with his scruffy beard who made it all seem a lot better with a "Hey, how's it going..."

The next morning, Timmy was in a cast. They had run him over in the middle of the street and broken his hip.

The marketplace is controlled by emotion. That is all there is to say. Anon wanted to stay in a good mood. It was important to him. Perhaps the single most important thing to do was remain positive about the situation no matter how desperate people were making it out to be. In the afternoon on Sunday he would always walk down to the Farmer's Market and get fresh oranges and sunflowers for the room. It cheered the place up and made him feel better. He would read books in the late afternoon and they were always on different subjects. He had a copy of Plato's Republic that smelled like gasoline from being in the back of the car so long. He had a book by W.C. Fields, a book by Oliver Wendell Holmes, some Hemingway, Fitzgerald.

When he got to the apartment there was a pamphlet for Scientology courses on his doorknob.

The new neighbor was a Scientologist. He noticed all the doors had them.

The walls were paper thin too and the whole situation had him a bit concerned. He didn't know exactly why, but it concerned him.

He sat on the couch in his little room and played guitar. He fiddled with the four track tape

recorder and worked out a song. The room was a mess. There was laundry all over the floor. He took a long look around the place and decided to make an effort to get it all cleaned up and he opened the closet and shoved everything into it. There was even trouble closing the door because it was so stacked with clothes. Somehow he managed to force it shut. He went into the small kitchen and cooked some eggs and squeezed some of the fresh oranges. He had arrived at the market place late and the farmer had given him nearly ten pounds of oranges for a dollar.

He went out to the balcony and there he had a small Japanese rock garden. The hawks were flying above and he watched the birds in flight. It was a spectacular vision. He decided to take a bath and went inside to turn on the water. He was in the tub for about ten minutes and then got up and dressed.

## Chapter 3 And When Does the Fat Lady Sing?

Job 6:21 Now you too have proved to be of no help;  
you see something dreadful and are afraid.

Ronnie came bursting in.

“Don’t you ever knock?” he wondered.

“Sorry man, it was opened.”

“Well, next time, knock.”

“You want to smoke some really good pot?” Ronnie started to roll a joint on the table.

“I guess so.”

Ronnie rolled a joint and passed it along and then went over to the guitar and started tuning it up.

“What’s going on with you Ronnie, I never see you anymore.”

“Yeah, did you miss me?”

“Not really. “

“Ah, sure you did.”

Ronnie went over to the radio and put in some Black Sabbath. Anon was feeling a little stoned and sat on the couch and read some Fitzgerald. Ronnie listened to a few songs and played the guitar a little longer and then took off. Anon collected his change on the table and counted about four dollars. He went down to the Boulevard and decided to take a look at the used books and the Bookstore. There was a paperback version of Graham Greene’s “The Human Factor” and he paid

fifty six cents for it. He went to the back of the bookstore to play the piano and there was a stack of books on the piano so he couldn't get it opened. He decided to go over to the Roosevelt and see Joe who was working as the bartender in the restaurant. Joe was serving a couple of German tourists when he arrived and he took a seat on the stool and waited for Joe to finish up. Joe poured him some coffee and there was a soccer game on the television.

He returned to the apartment after a long walk down the Boulevard. He was tired of cooking and decided to go for some dinner after a short nap. He fell onto the bed and began to dream.

He awakened after about fifteen minutes and went to the bathroom and tried to read some Fitzgerald for a little while and then tried to go back to sleep. There were the sounds of helicopters outside and it was about a half hour before he could sleep again.

The Hotel Ducati in Milan is spectacular. The lobby is simply beautiful and the suites are truly elegant. In the dream, he was walking through the Hotel. Fitzgerald smiled from the bar and he went outside and took a stroll through the streets of Italy, finding a small café and place to sit, he read the International Tribune and wrote some poetry while waiting for the girl.

She appeared with a laugh and was wearing a tight miniskirt and red t-shirt that said "No problem." She ordered a latte and some biscotti for the two of them as she worked her hand around his knee and ran her other hand through his hair.

"What shall we do today?" she wondered.

"I hadn't given it much thought to tell you the truth." he told her.

"Perhaps we could rent a car and drive to Sienna." she said.

"We could do that. What will we do there?" he asked her.

"Don't you know? Today is the Palio." she explained.

"My god. Really? That would be fantastic." he said.

"Yes." she said.

They rented a small blue Fiat and started out of town. They stopped for some gas and she bought some sandwiches at a restaurant across the street. By the time they made it to Sienna it was afternoon and the town was exploding with excitement. People from everywhere in Italy had come to watch the horserace. Parking was next to impossible and it took an hour to find a seat in the square.

"Did you know that the riders sleep with the horses all week before the race?" he said to her.

"No I didn't hear that." she said.

"Yes, it's a tradition. They are all afraid the other towns will cheat and poison their horse." he explained.

"They do that?" she wondered.

"They do anything to win." he told her.

"What else do they do?" she laughed.

“Well, if you are winning the race and lose, sometimes they climb out from the stands and maul the racer to death because they think he cheated.” he told her.

“Really? That happens?”

“Many times.” he said.

He had a flask of Jack Daniels and offered her some. She said no and opened a bottle of water. There was a cackle of firecrackers and the race began. Neither one of them could tell what town won. It was all over quickly. They found a small trattoria for an early dinner and ordered. She had the tortellini and he ordered the veal scallopini.

The white wine was excellent and a violinist played “The Long and Winding Road.”

They enjoyed each other’s company very much.

“It’s been a long time” she said.

“Twenty years I think.” he told her.

“Only nineteen.” she said.

“Really?”

“Yes, it’s true.” she told him.

“Well you look as pretty as the day I met you.” he said to her.

“You are sweet. I am much older now.” she said.

“Not much.” he said.

She tossed her hair back and laughed in. She took out her brush from her black purse and worked it through her hair. They paid the bill and found the car. There was a lady selling flowers and he bought the girl some assorted wildflowers. They drove back to Milan and it did not take long.

When he returned to the hotel there was a message from his publisher that left a number to call in Rome for a radio interview. He could barely read the name on the message and had to ask the concierge.

It is there that he awakens from the dream. He rolls over and the time is nearly eleven o’clock at night. He’s dreary as he stands and finds the table lamp. Sylvester is at the table. He is a large, older negro who sleeps on the floor of the room on an air mattress in the corner. Sylvester is smoking a cigarette and staring out the window.

“Hello there fella.” he says.

“Hey. What’s happening?” Anon wonders.

“Not much. I got a fish for dinner.” he tells him.

“What kind?”

“Trout.” Sylvester tells him.

“Well, I’m going out on the town.” Anon tells him.

“I figured. Have fun.”

Anon grabs his keys. He finds a coat and leaves. Sylvester picks up a book by

Kerouac and starts to read. There is a blank piece of stationery in the front of the book and it says formally, The Hotel Ducati.

## Chapter 4 Shall we Dance?

The Garden of Eden is on Labrea and Hollywood Blvd and is a large dance club with a nice lounge outside with couches. The bar is always filled with beautiful women and they have a private room upstairs that looks down at the dance floor. Anon waited outside with the crowd and paid the twenty dollar fee to get in at the glass window.

He didn't notice anybody in particular that he knew so he went outside to sit quietly on the couches and wait for the crowd to gather. He could see the large painting of Marilyn Monroe on the wall of the building across the alley from the club and people were coming up the stairs from the back entrance and getting admitted from bodyguards dressed in black with radio headsets on and women in short skirts serving cocktails. He felt alone and wandered through the room and saw no one. He left early and walked around the Boulevard before returning to the apartment. When he arrived, Sylvester was asleep on the floor and he did not want to turn on the lights for fear of waking him.

In the morning he awakened late and Sylvester was already gone. It was Monday morning and there was nothing to do. He gathered up some reading materials, a few good books and some pen and paper and went to the park to spend the afternoon. There were children playing in the sandbox and a few men were tossing a ball back and forth, practicing their soccer. The ball rolled over to him and he threw it back. He noticed to yellow monarch butterflies in the trees and they rested for what seemed like an hour in the leaves. He had never seen butterflies so still before. He laughed as they departed playfully.

He took a long bus ride to Venice Beach and kicked off his shoes and went down to the shore to smell the ocean. He watched the sun slowly sink behind the water and he walked up and down the boardwalk. As the evening began he found himself back on the sand and listened to the sounds of the drums in the large drum circle near the water. People were dancing around and shaking tambourines, maracas, beating on conga drums, empty water bottles, anything they could find. He sat down again near the water and had a vision then with his eyes closed. There were thousands of people in this vision, all gathered around him, pointing at him, laughing hysterically. The more they pointed, the more they laughed. When he opened his eyes, there was only the sounds of the drums beating behind him. He took a bus back towards Hollywood and ate a three dollar dinner at the doughnut store before returning to the apartment.

When he returned to the small studio apartment Sylvester was trying to fix the sink. He had tried to put a fish down the garbage disposal and it got stuck. The radio was playing the local news and there was little Anon could do to help so he plumped down on the couch and started to fiddle with the guitar.

“How long has it been stuck for?” he wondered.

“I’ve been working on it about a half hour now.” Sylvester explained and wiped the sweat from his brow.

“I wonder if we should call the landlord.” Anon asked him.

“Well, give me another fifteen minutes and if I can’t get it fixed we’ll have to call him I guess.” Sylvester told him.

“Alright.”

The time went by and there was no progress. Anon picked up the telephone and paged the landlord. The phone rang back a few minutes later and there was a lot of yelling and screaming. The way it had ended was the landlord wanted them to both move out, that very night.

There was no money for anything then and he moved in with the Percy’s. They had a small bed on their balcony outside and it was comfortable but sometimes it rained and there were no windows so he got wet some nights.

They had a son about twelve years old and he would babysit on the weekends and one time they went to the museum to look at the paintings and he showed the boy Cezanne and Gaughin. They went to visit the Dinosaur bones in the East wing of the museum but there was a charge for tickets and they had no money. So he and the kid played on the grass outside and he remembered looking out at the little lake and being so ashamed of himself for not being able to buy the tickets that he almost cried.

“One day, when we have some money, I’ll take you back here and we’ll see the dinosaurs.” he said to the boy.

“That’s o.k” the boy said, as if he knew, they would never have money.



## Chapter 5 No Words

He had been in Florida for almost two years. It was always warm and sunny. There was no work in Los Angeles. He simply had to leave. He couldn't live there anymore. Everything had turned miserable. Then there was that day in December after Christmas when he went to the library to the room with the piano. He loved to practice in that room. It was a large brown piano in a big room that was quiet. He had played about an hour when a woman walked in and told him.

"You can't play that piano anymore. We don't let just anyone play that."

So he left. That was that. The next day he sat at the coffee shop and wondered about things. He could no longer play the piano. That was that. All of a sudden, he was living in a world without music. What a strange place it seemed now. He went back to the

place he was living and fell back into bed. The piano he was thinking, the piano.

His father had been a piano player and all his life he had heard the piano. His memories stretched back all the way across the entirety of his life. He suddenly had a memory of being a baby in his mother's arms and reaching out for the piano.

He had another memory then. A memory of his first day of school. A memory of walking through the large doors of the lobby of the school with his mother and his lunch pail looking for the room, for his first day of class. It was a bright world. A world full of possibilities. He remembered everything, the sunlight, the open skies. He remembered the flag, the red white and blue flag and the State flag. He remembered everything, only now, something was different in his memory. Now, the American flag was suddenly all black. It was a black flag and the world was now tyranny. It was a strange vision.

There was the memory of the first day and the American flag, the one where everything was perfect. Then there was the second memory, the different one. The one where everything had changed. He could not understand it. It bewildered him.

He awakened from the dream and remembered the piano. That was it. That was the answer. That is why the flag was black. Because there was no music anymore. Because of the silence.

The weather in Florida is pretty good. The palm trees swaying, the listless warm nights are all filled with wonder. Anon had spent the last two years in Delray Beach, the small village by the sea. At the age of 41 years old, he had returned to school and began studying math. There was simply nothing else to do. There had been no steady work in years and the days were empty and filled with remorse.

By February he found himself sleeping too much. It felt almost deadly. Entire days would go by and he would spend them in bed. It was as if a veil of gloom had descended into his life, a veil that would not lift, that had no end, weighty and oppressive.

There was waking up, having a cup of coffee, feeding the cat, eating, returning to sleep. That was the extent of it. There was nothing to watch on television, nothing to read in the newspapers, no songs to listen to, only a vast and eternal lapse into solitude.

Anon wakes up in the middle of the afternoon and realizes it was all a dream. He is still in Florida and there is nothing in the refrigerator for breakfast. He checks his wallet and realizes his new bank card is missing. He goes to the bank to order a new one.

The weather is good and he decides to get some doughnuts with his last twenty dollars and set out towards the beach.

The weather is hot and there are many people out for the Spring holidays. It is very difficult to find a place to park. Finally, after nearly a half hour, he finds a good space and starts out towards the ocean. He spends almost two hours in the sun and goes into the water but it is not yet the season and still cold.

At Alex's house he sits in the room in the darkness. He is immersed in the darkness. Desire is a crime. Passion is a crime. There is the repression of homosexuality followed by the *enforcement* of the repression. He understands this now. It is a world without love. There is the fear of what will happen to them, what they will do to them, what the consequences will be. It keeps them afraid, unable to reach out, unable to fulfill the basic natural expressions of their own emotions. Three cheers. It was the Doctor, speaking for the benefit of all society, who came to the conclusion that love was an immoral act. Then you would hear the sound of two horns blasting in the distance, as if to say, no, it's not true, they are not afraid of us. As the repression existed everywhere, in the broken computer, in the interrupted radio signal, in the stolen tire, in the one lone show left on the street to make the message.

Anon Eterniti sat in his bed and listened to the music from the Summer of 42 and recalled a time when the world could love. When love was beautiful. When romance was a part of art. Love was something else now. Love was a disease. Love was a sickness. Love was a threat to the powers of conformity, a threat to a Church that was gradually enslaving the whole of humanity into its own credo, its own ethics, its own vision of morality. This is what Anon Eterniti was fighting.

## **Chapter 6 A Wonderful Sense of Such Nonsense**

Why was I enclosed? Why is the world not open to me? Why the gift of hard times? What was the excuse? From a single speech? A single moment in time? Crisis could fall onto crisis for a certain event? Wasn't modernity more adept than that?

These were the thoughts of Anon Eterniti as he languished in the despair of his evil shameful life.

It was two years ago, at a party for the artist Fiasco Debacle that he first met the comedian

Tommy Levin. Tommy was one of those irate bastards who complained about everything. The trouble with his career was that his repertoire of nearly three thousand jokes was all used up. He had, through the years, with his dynamic Comedy Team, the

Funnies, packaged and repackaged the jokes all over the world a million times over and, well, the simple truth was, they just weren't that funny anymore.

Tommy was talking about going back to school and maybe a career as a psychoanalyst or maybe pursuing his interest in environmentalism. They were talking in front of the bar, sipping

The Christal champagne, both amused by the large oil painting entitled "Insist." It was a picture of eve sitting underneath the tree of knowledge with the snake wrapped around the tree, coming to greet her. He liked the painting, thought it was bold, vivid, expressive. Tommy cracked a joke about "she should be ashamed of herself, naked like that."

He laughed and thought that was probably the funniest thing he had heard Tommy say the entire evening. There were some New York executive types, models, rock and rollers strung out on meth and oxycottons, dressed in velvet, dressed in goth, dressed in suits. Everybody in New York always had to give the appearance of being different, even though it seemed like everybody felt the same.

The artist, Fiasco Debacle, was a short Cuban with an affinity for quoting Andy Warhol and claimed to be a gay lover of the now dead Basquiat. Tommy wondered why he wasn't dead.

Anon felt like that joke was too easy and he moved away from the crowd and Tommy started to yell from across the room.

"Eterniti, I'm outraged. You come back here. I demand satisfaction!"

Anon met him in the middle of the room and looked him squarely in the eye.

"You're a joker." Anon told him.

Tommy started to laugh. Laugh at louder. Louder and more obnoxiously. Anon had no choice. He returned to the bar and got another drink.

"What's the matter?" Tommy said. "Why the sad face?"

` "Look at me Tommy. Look at me. It's eleven thirty and I'm not even drunk yet. It's crazy." Anon said.

"I know. I know. Let's go to the Limelight and pick up girls or fly to Bermuda in a private jet or something." Tommy decided.

“I sort of like the Bermuda thing. I just don’t have my bathing suit.” Anon told him.

“I’m a visualist. I believe in the extreme nature of humanity and the artist’s unique position in the world to accomplish the objective of revealing it.” Fiasco explained to the crowd.

“This one, over here? What’s it called?” the famous debutante Jackie Page wondered.

She was wearing one of those shrill Escada numbers, probably \$40,000 or near that.

“You like it?” Fiasco exploded. “That’s called “Leaving Town.” He explained.

“How much for that?” she wondered.

“Seven and a half million.” He said shortly.

“Can you deliver it Monday?” she wondered.

“Of course bitch, I can have it there Saturday night.” He said softly to her, squeezing her hand.

“Tommy you are either the antedote to a really terrible party or the cause of all my suffering. You decide.” Anon said to him carefully, wiping the booze off his t-shirt.

“Ah you break my heart kid.” Tommy told him. “Everybody’s doing lines in the rest room. You want some?”

“Nah, that shit always makes me feel like someone just plugged me into an electric socket.” Anon told him matter of factly.

“Well, I’ll be back in a few minutes.” Tommy explained.

Anon found himself alone when Jackie came up with some chocolate strawberries and sidled up next to him.

“Well, well, well, what do we have here? Anon Eternity, back from his journey into the African Sahara.” She said warmly.

“Come on. I was just reading Hemmingway.” He said to her.

“You said you were too busy. You didn’t want to fuck.” Nobody tells me that.” She said.

“I know.” He explained.

“You know what?” she questioned him.

“What?” he wondered back.

“It kind of turned me on.” She said.

Anon started to walk away slowly but she followed, of course.

“I know.” He told her.

She giggled in her little childish way.

“I have something to tell you.” He said to her.

“What?” she looked quizzically.

He grabbed her face with both hands and started to kiss her, a real deep sensuous kiss.

Then he relaxed and let her go, slowly, caressing her cheeks with his fingertips.

“I was kidding.” He said to her.

She fainted onto the floor and a woman screamed.

“What did you do?” someone wondered.

“I think she’s had too much to drink.” Anon said.

They started to slap her face and she awakened in another twenty seconds or so.

“Should I call an ambulance?” Debbie Starlett, the rock and roll singer from Queens was suddenly showing some brains and that sort of impressed Anon, he looked up at her and their eyes met.

“No, I’ll be o.k.” Jackie said.

“Oh don’t look at me that way.” She told him. “I know what you’re up to.”

“What?” he wondered.

“You’re going to sleep with her. Aren’t you?” Jackie said dismally.

“Well, to tell you the absolute, god’s honest truth.... probably.”

Debbie laughed and the two of them walked out while the rest of the guests were reviving Jackie.

Tommy ran out of the Gallery with “What’s up man, I’m ready to party, where are you going?”

Debbie and Anon were already in her limousine by the time Tommy got to the curb.

It was Saturday afternoon and Anon found himself sitting next to an old man on a bench in the Washington square park. The old man was feeding the pigeons and more and more seemed to gather as the time went by.

“What is your name?” Anon wondered.

“I am Issac.” He said softly.

“Really. That’s a nice name.”

“What is your name?”

“My name is Anon. Anon Eternity.”

“Nice to meet you.”

They sat quietly together through the afternoon and there were many people all around.

“What do you do Anon? You are such a young man.” Issac wondered.

“Well, to tell you the truth, I thought maybe I’d be a writer.”

“That’s a good thing to do.” Issac said.

“Really? You think so?” Anon said.

“Yes. Absolutely. In fact, that’s what I do.”

“You’re a writer? Wow. Are you any good?” Anon asked casually.

“I don’t think so.” Issac said and stopped a moment. “But I once won a Nobel prize.”

“You’re serious?” Anon wondered.

“Yes. Many years ago now.” Issac said.

“Can I tell you the truth?” Anon asked him.

“Certainly. The truth is always nice.” Issac said.

“I actually read about you in the New York Times. The article said you feed the pigeons here.” Anon explained.

“You wanted to meet me?” Issac asked him matter of factly.

“Yes. Yes. I came to meet you.” Anon said almost short of breath. “There was something I wanted to know. I guess, I wanted to know.... How do you do it?” Anon wondered.

Issac took his cane and stood up, buttoning his coat, getting ready to go.

“It was all I could do, Mr. Eterniti. I did it because that was all I could do. Many of us

Could do nothing. You understand. Not for lack of talent. You understand.” Issac pressed his cane against the ground. “Goodbye Mr. Eterniti.”

“Thank you sir.”



## Chapter 7 Melinda and the Horrible Truth of Art

At the Bleeker Street Café he waited for his old friend Sans Siciliano. The waitress served nice coffee and he always got it free, after all, they were roommates. He did not have to wait long when Sans Siciliano made his grand entrance with a purple crushed velvet jacket and a panama hat with a yellow feather.

“You look like a pimp.” He said to Sans.

“Frank Sinatra walks into a radio station to give an interview. He asks the radio manager, can I say pimps and whores on the air? Because everyone is either a pimp or a whore and if I can’t say pimps and whores on the radio, I’m leaving.” Sans tells him. “The manager says no, you can’t say pimps and whores, Frank.” Sans continues. “So what does Frank do?”

“He leaves.” Anon replies matter of factly.

“Exactly.” San tells him.

“Don’t leave me Sans.” He says to him.

“I won’t leave you Anon. Just work on your greetings.”

“Alright, I’ll work on my greetings.” Anon tells him.

“Did you get any Christmas presents?” Sans wonders.

“What do you mean by that?” Anon asks him.

“Nothing. Just making conversation.” Sans tells him.

“Sans, for chrissakes it’s April.”

“Hey, I haven’t seen you in awhile.”

“Tell me have you seen Fiasco Debacle’s new work?” Anon wonders.

“It’s like a transsexual groaning after his third botox injection.” Sans explains.

“That about says it.” Anon says.

“Art to me, art to me has to speak of life, to whisper in my ear, not scream.

Fiasco lacks subtlety now that he is spending his time with Crystal.”

“Who is Crystal?”

“Crystal Meth. Horrible. Horrible drug.” Sans tells him.

“I don’t know that one.” Anon replies.

“Ah they have labs set up to cook that crap everywhere. I went to buy a parakeet the other day and the guy had a lab in the back. Pitiful.” Sans Siciliano looks at his coffee dejected.

“Now that sounds like a painting.” Anon smiles.

“Funny. That’s what I thought.”

“I see him in the news all the time. It’s like he’s become the Tom Cruise of the artworld.” Anon orders another cup of coffee for both of them.

“I know. I know. I can’t even read the paper anymore. I’m afraid I’ll see him.” Sans  
puts his hat on the chair and brushes off his shoes.

“Have you been painting Anon, tell me truthfully.”

“Not as much as I’d like. You know how I work. I squeeze three hundred dollars worth of oils on the canvas before the thing even takes shape. I get so frustrated.” Anon tells him.

“Well, if you are going to be a great artist, truly a great artist, Anon, you have to get more frustrated.” Sans Siciliano smiles now and waves at a couple in the corner. “That’s Edgar Walters the art critic from the Village Voice.”

“I’ve never heard of him.” Anon says.

“That’s because you don’t read enough.” Sans Siciliano scolds him.

## Chapter 8 The Afternoon at Tommy's Place

1 Corinthian 13:4 "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

Peculiar.

He started out for Tommy Levin's about two in the afternoon. New York was sizzling in the summer and the subway made him sweat indecently. He got off near Time's Square and headed over to Tommy's small one bedroom apartment. When he got there Tommy was smoking a joint with some oxycottons on the table and a noose tied to the lightbulb.

"Looks like you had a long night Tommy."

"Yeah, just trying to come down."

"Maybe I should throw out the chairs."

"Nah, I'd just use the sofa."

Anon started to put the pills back in the bottle and clean the empty beer cans into the garbage.

"The garbage Tommy. The garbage can is the most important thing to all of this. Without the garbage can this would all be truly senseless, but as it stands, *there is a garbage can* and that means we can put this thing all together. Do you understand what I am trying to say to you?" Anon explained contritely. Tommy was watching a porno.

"Yeah, senseless." Tommy said whisfully.

"Come on man. Let's go over to the Whitney and see some art or something, pick up girls, live the life."

"Man, you're distracting me. I'm watching something important." Tommy said matter of factly.

"This is not cool Tommy. In another three days I am going to come back and you'll be blue on the couch and I'll have to call your Dad and tell him the bad news."

"What's the bad news?" Tommy wondered.

"That you're dead." Anon told him.

"He won't think that's such bad news." Tommy said.

"What time is it?" Anon wondered.

"Why?" Tommy asked him.

"I have to meet Liberty at five." Anon explained.

"I don't know. My watch broke."

"Check your cell phone." Anon told him.

"It has a clock?" Tommy wondered.

"Sure it does man. Digital."

"Wow man. It's almost three."

"Well that give me almost two hours to get you a sandwich."

"What kind of sandwich?"

"Oh, now he's up, huh. I say sandwich and all of a sudden he's up. How about a tuna sandwich Tommy?"

"How about a shut up before I kill you I have a headache sandwich Anon."

"I never heard of that one. Does it have chicken?"

"No man, beef stroganoff."

"You are a sick, sick man Tommy. We're gonna give you the zoloft."

"Will it effect my penis because I have an internet date tonight." Tommy explained.

"I don't think so. How did you get an internet date. That thing never works for me."

"It's easy man. She asks what you do, tell her you're a serial killer, don't upset me."

"Wow. Really?"

"Works everytime."

He got Tommy a sandwich at the Roxy Deli and they sat next to a goth couple who ate soup and smoked despite the objections of the waiter. Finally the manager came over and kicked the couple out and that made Tommy laugh.

Anon kept his eye on the clock and realized it was time to go about four when he decided to make the journey back down to the village to meet Liberty who was getting off her job as a movie ticket taker. Tommy told him he had to go buy a new large screen television and they said their goodbyes outside the deli.

Anon made the journey in less than forty minutes. He waited nearly an hour out front of the Tower records store but she never showed up. He strolled through Washington square park and thought maybe he would find her there but there was no sign of her anywhere. He sat by the fountain and wondered what to do. It was unusual for her to break a date, but that was the way things go sometimes.

## Chapter 9 Mr. Wu, what will you do?

It was a strange day indeed when Anon Eterniti went to Mr. Wu's print shop and found that Mr. Wu was gone. His store had been closed and a new owner was in business. Mr. Wu was an older Korean man who used to bring the copies up to the office personally in the days when Anon first ran the Talent Agency on Wilshire Blvd. He still had fond memories of Mr. Wu and his nice wife on worked at the front desk of his store.

They were always very kind and did the jobs quickly and charged very little money for their work. Anon felt the whole thing was a disaster and walked away in dejection.

Los Angeles was cool and the weather was sunny. The flight back to Florida went fine. He was living in a men's half way house near Atlantic Avenue in Delray Beach, Florida. It was the only place he could afford now. On his 42nd birthday he sat alone in his small room and remembered the past. There would be no candles, no birthday cake, no celebration, no nothing. In fact, the day went by rather quickly with no sign of anything. He was learning to live beyond the sadness of it, learning to get used to it; although he did not understand why he should have to. There was a picture of his father sitting on a couch, holding a camera in a picture frame near

the bed. His mother sent a photo of herself with his sister's new baby from California and he put it next to the one of his father. The days went by quickly here with nothing to do. Sometimes he would drive into town and have a cup of coffee and a pastry but otherwise that was the most eventful thing in his life. Imagine.

Sometimes he would get online and check the daily casting sheets and see how the entertainment business was slowly changing. The pound had risen over two dollars. The yen was holding between 110 and 120. Good gasoline was over \$3.00. Everyday Sylvester would call to announce the end of the world and every morning the world would begin again. Perhaps good ole Sylvester was suffering from a post traumatic stress disorder from Viet Nam. Perhaps all the years of war had convinced him that America deserved to be destroyed. This was not the Darshan of Anon Eterniti. It was that day at the end of the summer in 2007 that Anon Eterniti decided to go on his first visionquest. He was not sure how it would begin or what he would find, but he decided the time was necessary.

The visionquest is a relic of the American Indians. It is said that crazy horse had them as did Geronimo. Anon was half Indian, related to Chief Joseph and Geronimo. There are many parts of the history of American Indians we will never know. More about that later. Tommy Levin was a failing comic. Their friendship had began long ago. It was strange, here he was sitting at the dock of the bay, staring out at the waters, trying to search his soul for his first real visionquest of his manhood and all he could see was the laughing face of Tommy Levin drinking a bottle of wine and telling him "no dice."

"Maybe if I start drinking or something." Anon said to himself. He knew it was time to get back to New York. The heat in Florida was nice and all, but he missed the electric mood of winter in New York, the rush and grind, the people struggling to get ahead in the cataclysm of cosmopolitan culture that sacrificed his morality for art. He thought of Tommy again, would he ever be a great comic? Would he get the chance to make them laugh?

It rained again that night. It rained hard but only for a short while. He heard cars passing by on the street. He sat alone in his small room far away from the world. No one would write, no one would call. Tomorrow his Uncle Sam would get the letter about the money. He wondered how Uncle Sam would take it. Maybe he would file it in his big oak desk and take a drink of whiskey and say forget that no good nephew of mine. He never knew with his Uncle Sam. Sam had a tendency to dismiss everything Anon wrote with a slighted degree of prejudice. It was the horrible truth of their relationship, Uncle Sam just didn't like Anon's side of the family and no matter how many times Anon kissed up to him, Sam was either too busy or too eager to forget everything and just cry "it's all over" because long ago he had lost his wife Maggie to Dr. Melvin Small and how could an old drunkard like Sam possibly compete with a high falootin pediatricist who owned his own shoe store?

The screen wipes made him laugh now. They used to shock him. In the heartbeat of a second,

thirty hours of work could be lost in editing. That is why Anon Eterniti would back up his data two, three four times to prevent the losses. He rarely lost data anymore. The battle was like a joke to him. He fought the war daily in cyberspace and all the unanti-sip(ate?)d disasters no longer shocked him.

Dr. Melvin Small was crying to his therapist, Judge Daul, a mild mannered Freudian hypnotist who worked on the Upper West Side for a very high fee. "They were trying to cause all kinds of crazy schemes..." Dr. Small says.

"You are being theatrical." Dr. Daul tells him, lighting his pipe and then tapping the ashes out in the ashtray.

"I just don't have time for this business." Dr. Small tells him.

"Is that crazy?" Dr. Daul wonders.

"Well, gee I don't know. I think that is just so messed up." Dr. Small says.

"That's getting awfully cliché now, wouldn't you say, Doctor?" Dr. Daul tells him.

"What would you like me to say?" Dr. Small asks him.

"Well, as one Doctor to another. Why don't you start by being honest. Why don't you put it this way. Say you don't like her kids. You think they are monsters.

They go into the garage, spin your records, crack them, scratch them. It's your personal collection. It bothers you. A man is entitled to his eccentricities, don't you think Doctor? If the entire world were unaberrated it wouldn't be a very fun place, now would it?"

## Chapter 10 Repete

"Thy body is like a heap of wheat fenced about with lilies." [Song of Songs, vii. 3]

Los Angeles was always beautiful in the mornings. He put the beautiful violet lilies in the vase in the middle of the glass table and took his seat. He had to catch his breath a bit before work began and he knew this was going to be a long day, rent day. It would take everything he had just to get it paid. He checked the mail and there were three checks. All told, it would leave him forty seven dollars above water after the rent cleared. He thought about the three dollar chinese dinner he would order that night and picked up the phone and went to work.

There were no messages. It was two weeks now since a job had come over the desk. "Thy body is like a heap of wheat" refers to the fact that what we do in this world is of no

consequence; he told himself.

Kathy called then with another audition. She had called at least a hundred times before and it was always the same, never any bookings. The tone of her voice made him feel strange, like he had committed a crime he didn't know about, like he was a rapist or a murderer or worse. It was a strange feeling.

He awakened from a dream at five o'clock in the small bedroom in Florida. In the dream he was on a bus with two hefty garbage bags filled with his clothes. The bus stops at Wilshire and Santa Monica and he gets off with his garbage bags,

That is the whole dream. He awakens with one thought - where will I sleep? He reruns the situation in his mind. He thinks of the alleys, the garbage cans, the city streets. He remembers something from the dream. When he was on the bus he had a thought about returning to his high school. When he awakens he realizes that was thirty years ago in the dream. He must have lost his mind. Maybe they had done something to him, a hospital, something.

Lunch with Tommy and Fiasco was at a small pizza joint in midtown Manhattan. It was nice to think about the big city again. It was winter's first snow so they could not sit outside. Tommy was drinking Pellegrino with Fiasco when Anon Eterniti arrived late.

"Where have you been?" Tommy wonders.

"Anon, sit down. Sit down immediately" Fiasco commands.

"Ah yes. Where are my manners? I am late again."

"Where were we?" Tommy wonders.

"I was saying that the feeling is existential. The ideology however, is surreal. For instance, if you say

shoe, this could be something you wear, or a demand to leave, the beginning even, if I may say,

of diaspora. It is mentality as well as object." Fiasco elucidates for his audience."

"So I see. The concept of the shoe itself could be a transmission of evil." Anon says.

"Yes. Exactly. A rapture and embrace of evil." Fiasco admits.

The waiter comes and takes the order. They decide on a large pizza margarita with a large caesar's salad.

"I dreamed I was bald. I was bald and had to wear a wig." Tommy says dejectedly.

"Perhaps you should be drinking heavily." Fiasco tells him.

"No, let's not get Tommy started. You never know where it will end." Anon says.

That's about where it begins. The interminable, deafening noise of a jackhammer outside. The

glass on the table starts to shake as a hardhat on the corner starts to carve away at the concrete sidewalk. The waiter apologizes for the inconvenience.

"You know, it's sad. I always imagined I would be doing something else. I mean I look at all the people on the streets and they all seem to be headed somewhere. You know, a sense of direction to their lives and for me, life is so dull, so droll, so completely meaningless and I do wonder where it begins and ends for me." Tommy tells them.

"Why don't you start by imagining yourself with hair." Anon says.

“Auguste Comte said

"There must always be a spontaneous harmony between the parts and the whole of the social system. . . . It is evident that not only must political institutions and social manners, on the one hand, and manner and ideas on the other, be always mutually connected; but further that this consolidated whole must always be connected, by its nature, with the corresponding state of the integral development of humanity" Sans Siciliano arrived briskly and sat down without an invitation.

“Oh by all means Sans,” Tommy says to him.